

Claims

1. A support mechanism for supporting a hood with respect to a vehicle to which the hood is pivotally coupled, the support mechanism comprising:

a first support pivotally mounted on the vehicle near a rear end of the hood;

a second support mounted on the vehicle forward of the first support;

a first arm coupled to the rear end of the hood, the first arm being releasably and pivotally coupled to the first support; and

a second arm pivotally coupled to a central portion of the hood, the second arm being releasably and pivotally coupled to the second support, the support mechanism permitting the hood to be pivoted rearwardly about the first support to a fully raised position wherein a front end of the hood is positioned substantially vertically above the rear end of the hood when the first arm is pivotally coupled to the first support and the second arm is uncoupled from the second support.

2. The support mechanism of claim 1, further comprising:

a bracket fixed to the central portion of the hood, the second arm having a first end pivotally coupled to the bracket and having a second end releasably and pivotally coupled to the second support; and

a spring link assembly coupled between the bracket and the second arm.

3. The support mechanism of claim 2, wherein the spring link assembly comprises:

a first link having a first end pivotally coupled to the bracket and having a second end;

a second link having a first end pivotally coupled to the second arm and having a second end pivotally coupled to the second end of the first link; and

a resilient member coupled between the first and second link and biased to move the second arm in a direction which raises the front end of the hood.

4. The support mechanism of claim 1, wherein:

the hood can be placed in a service position wherein the rear end of the hood is higher than the front end of the hood and wherein the first arm is uncoupled <sup>from</sup> ~~from~~ the first support.

5. The support mechanism of claim 2, further comprising:

a variable length member having a first end pivotally coupled to the bracket  
and having a second end releasably and pivotally coupled to the second arm.

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